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DARKMAN

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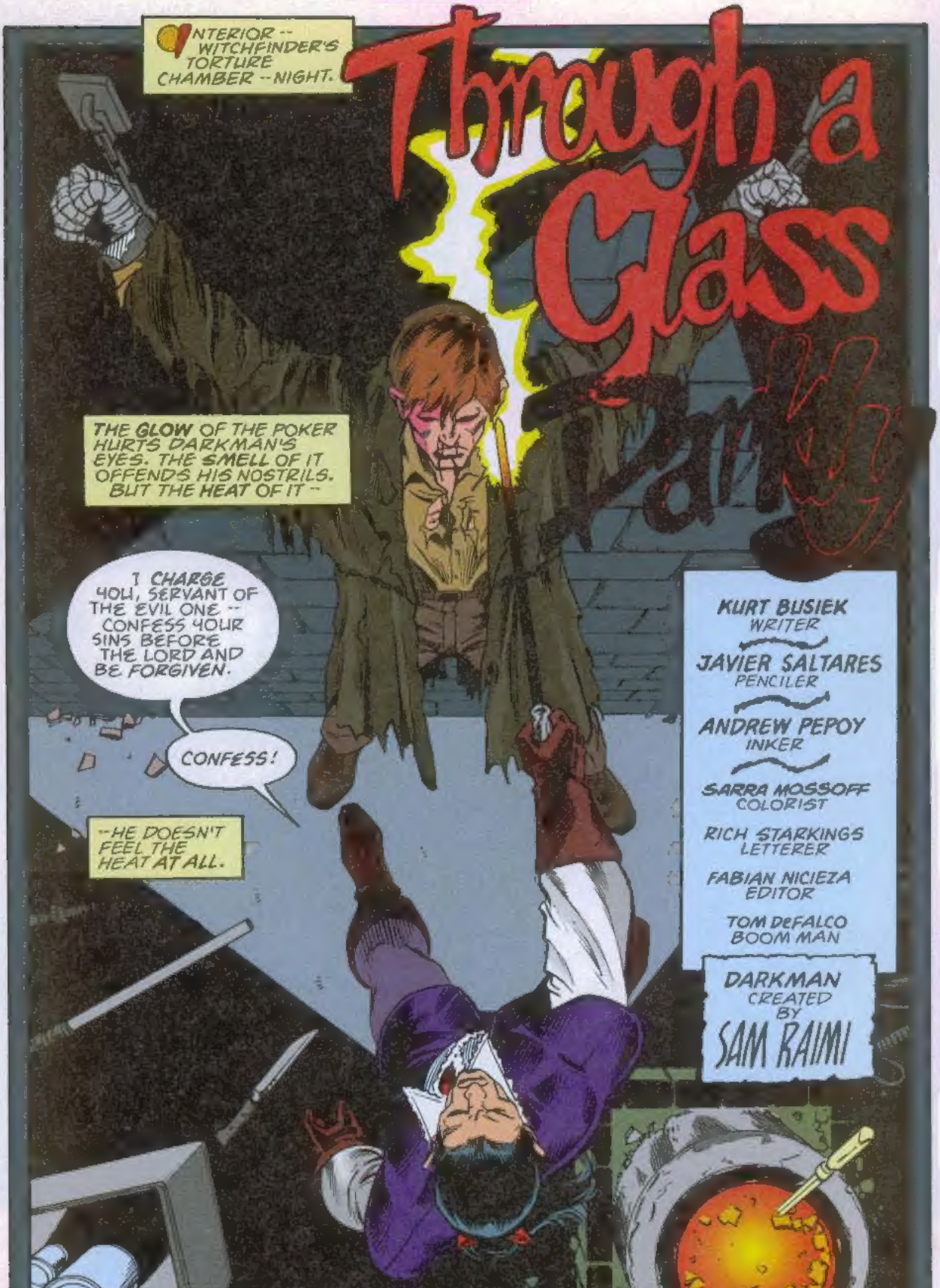
TORTURE CHAMBER



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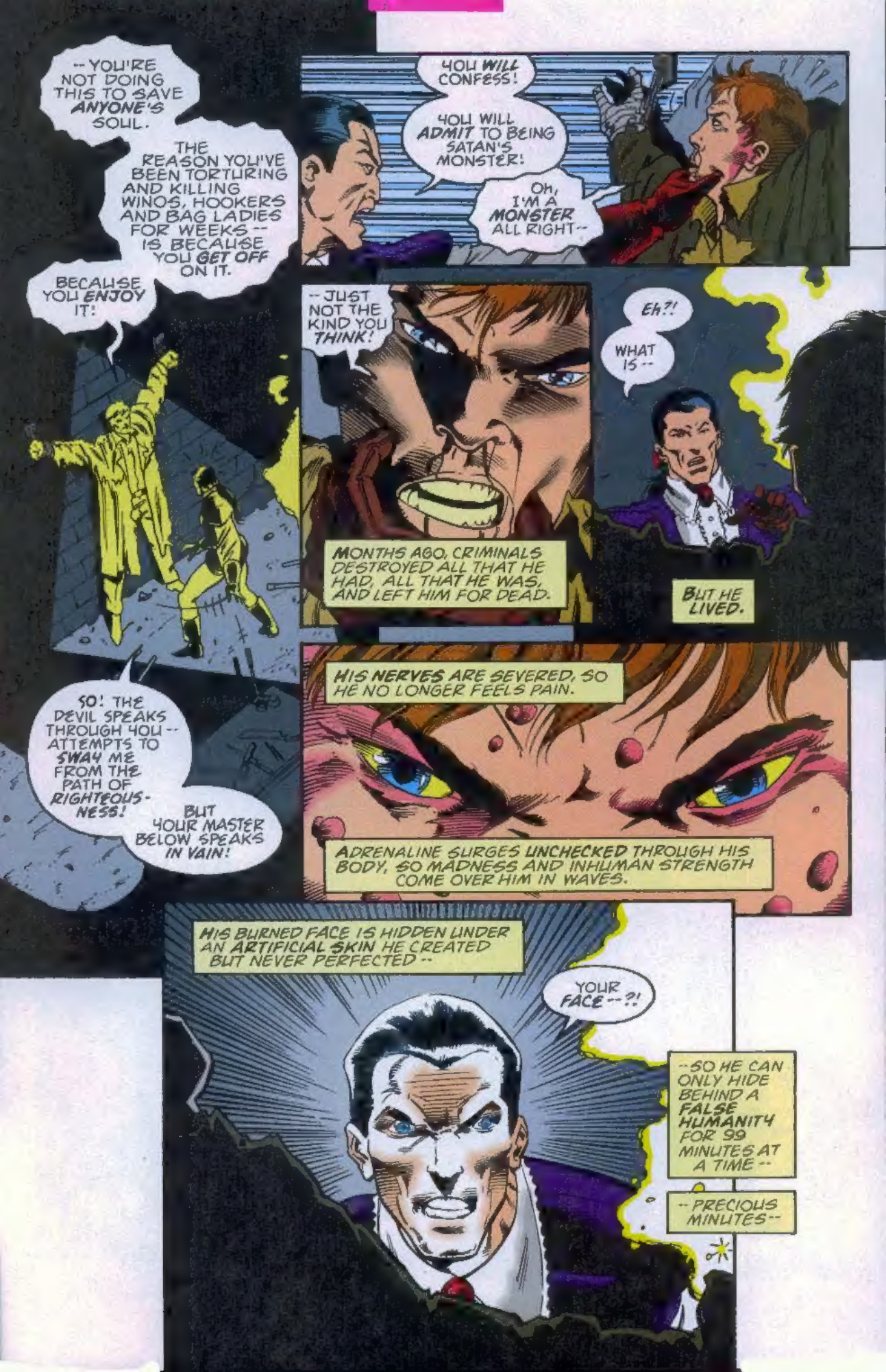
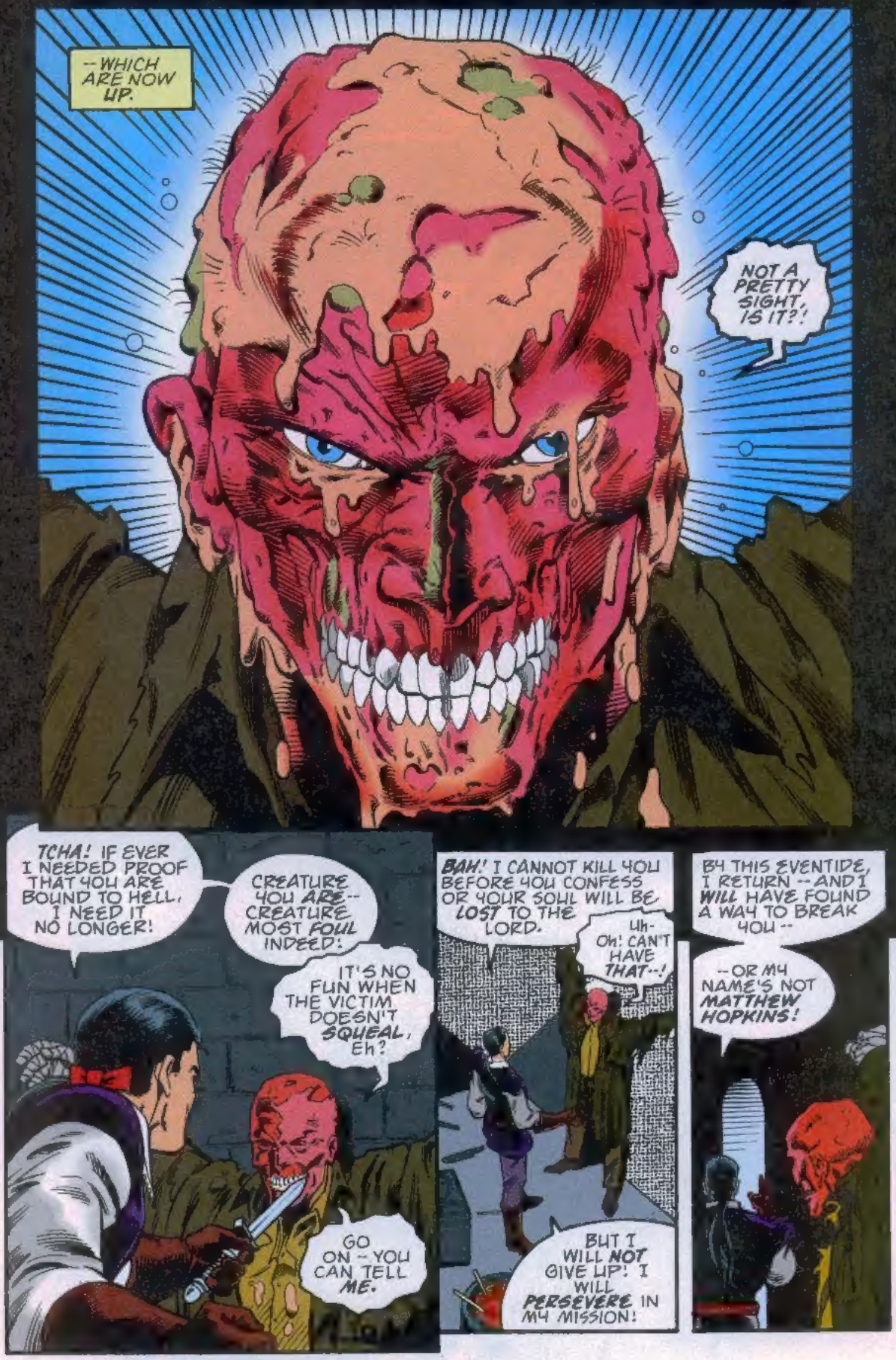
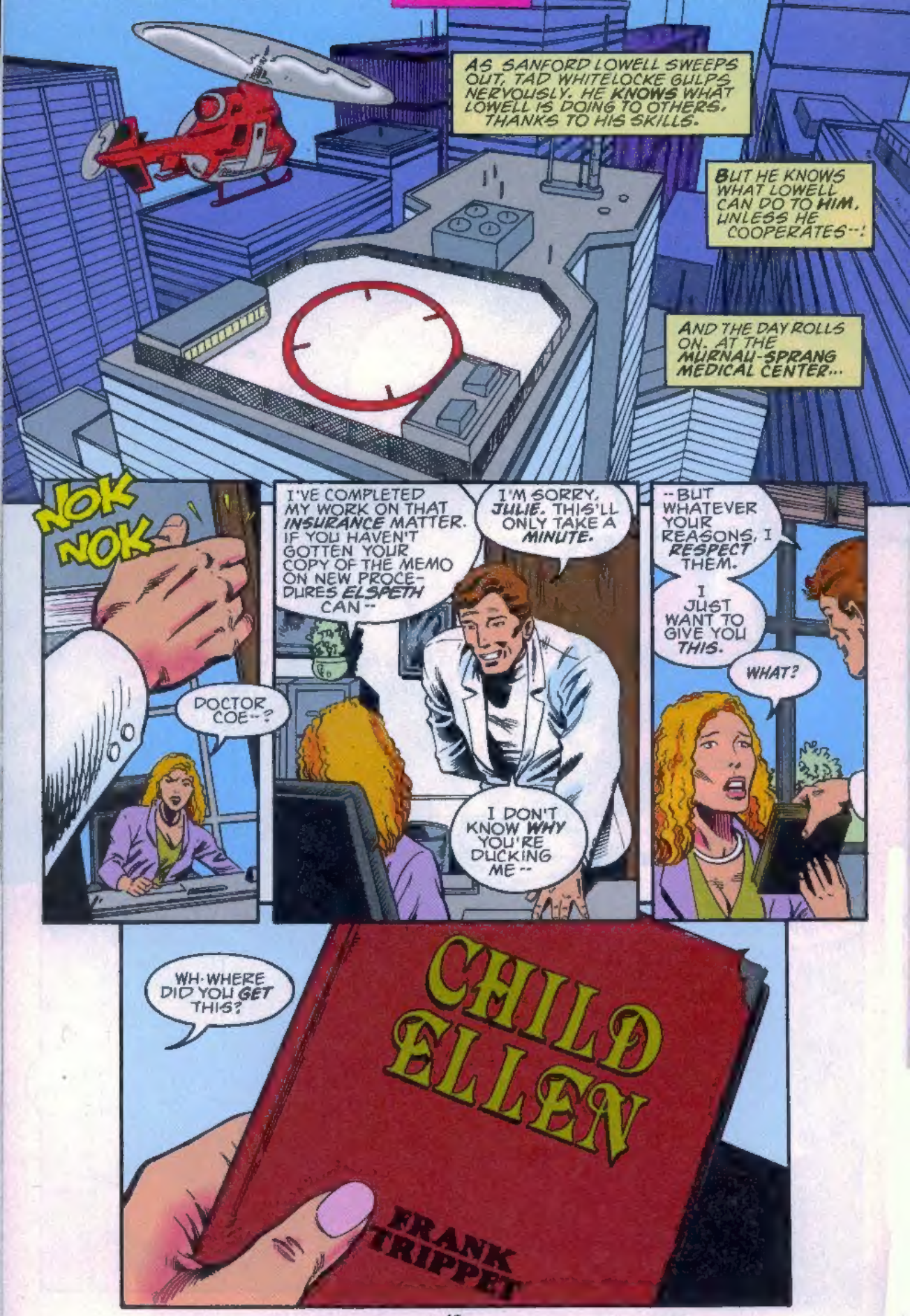
WHIPS. THUMBSCREWS. BEATINGS. BLADES.
IT FEELS TO DARKMAN LIKE IT'S BEEN GOING ON FOREVER, AND FRANKLY--
--HE'S GETTING BORED.
TSSSSSS
YOU DO NOT SPEAK -- NOT EVEN THE SLIGHTEST CRY OR MOAN OF PAIN.
THE DEVIL MUST BE STRONG WITHIN YOU. BUT MARK MY WORDS --
--THE WITCH-FINDER GENERAL HAS NOT FAILED YET, AND WILL NOT FAIL NOW!
DARKMAN WONDERS -- NOT FOR THE FIRST TIME -- HOW HE GOT CAUGHT UP IN THIS MESS--
--AND THE IMAGES FLICKER ACROSS THE SURFACE OF HIS BRAIN --
HOW HE RESCUED A BAG LADY WHO WAS BURNING AT THE STAKE -- ONLY TO HAVE HER DIE IN THE EMERGENCY ROOM OF THE NEAREST HOSPITAL.*
HOW HER TORMENTOR STALKED HIM --
-- DRUGGED HIM --
* LAST ISSUE -- FABIAN.
I DO THIS TO SAVE YOUR SOUL, CREATURE!
CONFESS!
:SIGH:
WHY DON'T YOU CONFESS, "WITCH-FINDER?"

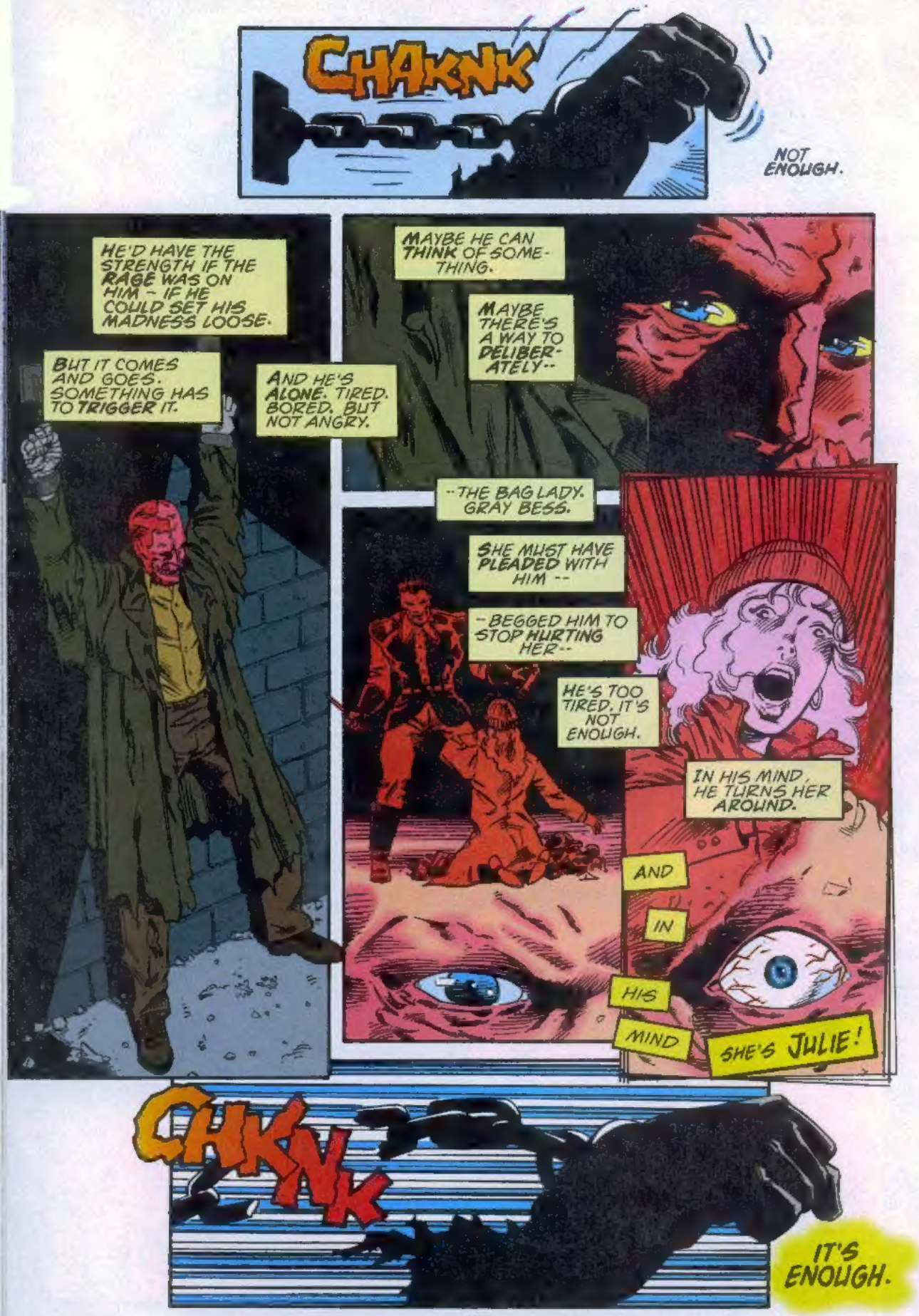

-- YOU'RE NOT DOING THIS TO SAVE ANYONE'S SOUL.
THE REASON YOU'VE BEEN TORTURING AND KILLING WINOS, HOOKERS AND BAG LADIES FOR WEEKS -- IS BECAUSE YOU GET OFF ON IT.
BECAUSE YOU ENJOY IT!
YOU WILL CONFESS!
YOU WILL ADMIT TO BEING SATAN'S MONSTER!
OH, I'M A MONSTER ALL RIGHT--
-- JUST NOT THE KIND YOU THINK!
EH?!
WHAT IS --
MONTHS AGO, CRIMINALS DESTROYED ALL THAT HE HAD, ALL THAT HE WAS, AND LEFT HIM FOR DEAD.
BUT HE LIVED.
SO! THE DEVIL SPEAKS THROUGH YOU -- ATTEMPTS TO SWAY ME FROM THE PATH OF RIGHTEOUSNESS!
BUT YOUR MASTER BELOW SPEAKS IN VAIN!
HIS NERVES ARE SEVERED, SO HE NO LONGER FEELS PAIN.
ADRENALINE SURGES UNCHECKED THROUGH HIS BODY, SO MADNESS AND INHUMAN STRENGTH COME OVER HIM IN WAVES.
HIS BURNED FACE IS HIDDEN UNDER AN ARTIFICIAL SKIN HE CREATED BUT NEVER PERFECTED --
YOUR FACE --?!
-- SO HE CAN ONLY HIDE BEHIND A FALSE HUMANITY FOR 99 MINUTES AT A TIME --
-- PRECIOUS MINUTES --


--WHICH ARE NOW UP.
NOT A PRETTY SIGHT, IS IT?!
TCHA! IF EVER I NEEDED PROOF THAT YOU ARE BOUND TO HELL, I NEED IT NO LONGER!
CREATURE YOU ARE-- CREATURE MOST FOUL INDEED!
IT'S NO FUN WHEN THE VICTIM DOESN'T SQUEAL, Eh?
GO ON - YOU CAN TELL ME.
BAH! I CANNOT KILL YOU BEFORE YOU CONFESS OR YOUR SOUL WILL BE LOST TO THE LORD.
Uh-Oh! CAN'T HAVE THAT--!
BUT I WILL NOT GIVE UP! I WILL PERSEVERE IN MY MISSION!
BY THIS EVENTIDE, I RETURN -- AND I WILL HAVE FOUND A WAY TO BREAK YOU --
-- OR MY NAME'S NOT MATTHEW HOPKINS!

NDS OF CRYSTALS . PYRAMIDS . PENDANTS & POTIONS . BU
HERMETIC·IDEAS
NOSIS REVEALS YOUR PAST LIVES! NOBLE OR COMMON! GOOD
--AND OPEN THE DOOR TO TODAY.
WHAT IS YOUR NAME?
MY NAME IS--
--MY NAME IS--
MY NAME IS SANFORD LOWELL. I AM THE POLICE COMMISSIONER OF THIS CITY AND THE CHAIRMAN OF THE METRO-POLITAN CLUB.
HAH! BACK AGAIN!
MY DEAR WHITELOCKE-- WHAT A SERVICE YOU PROVIDE!
PAST-LIFE REGRESSION-- IT LEAVES ONE FEELING SO REFRESHED--SO INVIGORATED--!
Uh, MR. L--
--Um, NO OFFENSE, BUT I REALLY DON'T WANT TO DO THIS ANY-MORE--
--I'M SURE YOU CAN FIND SOMEONE ELSE...
NONSENSE, WHITELOCKE.
YOU'RE THE BEST. AND SANFORD LOWELL DOESN'T SETTLE FOR ANY-THING LESS.
SEE YOU TONIGHT.


AS SANFORD LOWELL SWEEPS OUT, TAD WHITELOCKE GULPS NERVOUSLY. HE KNOWS WHAT LOWELL IS DOING TO OTHERS, THANKS TO HIS SKILLS.
BUT HE KNOWS WHAT LOWELL CAN DO TO HIM, UNLESS HE COOPERATES--!
AND THE DAY ROLLS ON. AT THE MURNAU-SPRANG MEDICAL CENTER...
NOK NOK
DOCTOR COE--?
I'VE COMPLETED MY WORK ON THAT INSURANCE MATTER. IF YOU HAVEN'T GOTTEN YOUR COPY OF THE MEMO ON NEW PROCEDURES ELSPETH CAN--
I'M SORRY, JULIE. THIS'LL ONLY TAKE A MINUTE.
I DON'T KNOW WHY YOU'RE DUCKING ME--
--BUT WHATEVER YOUR REASONS, I RESPECT THEM.
I JUST WANT TO GIVE YOU THIS.
WHAT?
WH-WHERE DID YOU GET THIS?
CHILD ELLEN
FRANK TRIPPET

THIS -- I'VE LOVED THIS BOOK SINCE I WAS --
--IT'S BEEN OUT OF PRINT FOR--
MY COPY WAS DESTROYED WHEN THE BOMB -- WHEN PEYTON --
HOW DID YOU KNOW?!
FOR A MOMENT, HE CONSIDERS TELLING HER THE TRUTH --
--THAT A SHADOWY FIGURE APPEARED IN HIS BEDROOM LAST NIGHT AND ORDERED HIM TO GIVE IT TO HER --
--ORDERED HIM TO DATE HER--
I -- Uh -- I SAW IT IN THE WINDOW OF A USED BOOK SHOP AND--
--I DON'T KNOW, SOMETHING ABOUT IT MADE ME THINK OF YOU.
I'M GLAD YOU LIKE IT. I'LL GO NOW.
JULIE HASTINGS WATCHES HIM GO, AND THINKS ABOUT HOW SHE'S BEEN HOLDING ON TO HER LONELINESS -- TO HER MISERY AND PAIN --
--BECAUSE IT'S ALL SHE HAS LEFT OF PEYTON--
--BUT--
W-WAIT!
UM -- WOULD YOU LIKE TO GRAB A CUP OF COFFEE AFTER WORK -- OR SOMETHING?
I'D LIKE THAT.
I THINK I'D LIKE THAT VERY MUCH.


CHAKNK
NOT ENOUGH.
HE'D HAVE THE STRENGTH IF THE RAGE WAS ON HIM - IF HE COULD SET HIS MADNESS LOOSE.
BUT IT COMES AND GOES. SOMETHING HAS TO TRIGGER IT.
AND HE'S ALONE. TIRED. BORED. BUT NOT ANGRY.
MAYBE HE CAN THINK OF SOMETHING.
MAYBE THERE'S A WAY TO DELIBERATELY--
--THE BAG LADY. GRAY BESS.
SHE MUST HAVE PLEADED WITH HIM --
--BEGGED HIM TO STOP HURTING HER--
HE'S TOO TIRED. IT'S NOT ENOUGH.
IN HIS MIND, HE TURNS HER AROUND.
AND
IN
HIS
MIND
SHE'S JULIE!
CHKNK
IT'S ENOUGH.

HEY, FRIEND -- HOLDIN' GREEN?
LEROUX PARK -- OF COURSE HE'D MAKE HIS BASE HERE.
HEY, BUDDY. SPARE ANY --
SO MANY HOMELESS PEOPLE -- LOST, DISCARDED REJECTS. LIKE ME.
SO MANY TARGETS FOR THE WITCHFINDER. BUT WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT IT?
I'M NO HERO.
WH-WHAT-EVER YOU SAY, BUDDY!
JUST D-DON'T HURT ME!
Hmh. COMPUTER'S TOO SLOW -- TOO MANY DAMAGED RAM SECTORS
THROW IN A FEW MORE BYPASS CODES.
AND THE DAY ROLLS ON.
HIS BODY IS STIFF THE TORTURE AND THE SWORD-THRUST -- THERE IS NO PAIN, OF COURSE --
PUT IT BEHIND YOU, PEYTON. A BAD DREAM. NOT YOUR BUSINESS.
--BUT HIS ARMS ARE CLUMSY--
--HIS FINGERS THICK ON THE KEYBOARD --
NO!
YOUR BUSINESS IS PERFECTING THE ARTIFICIAL SKIN -- RE-CLAIMING YOUR LIFE.
sSYNthesis IN progress
MalFuncTION sys systems DAMAGE OC-OCCURRING.
FRATSH

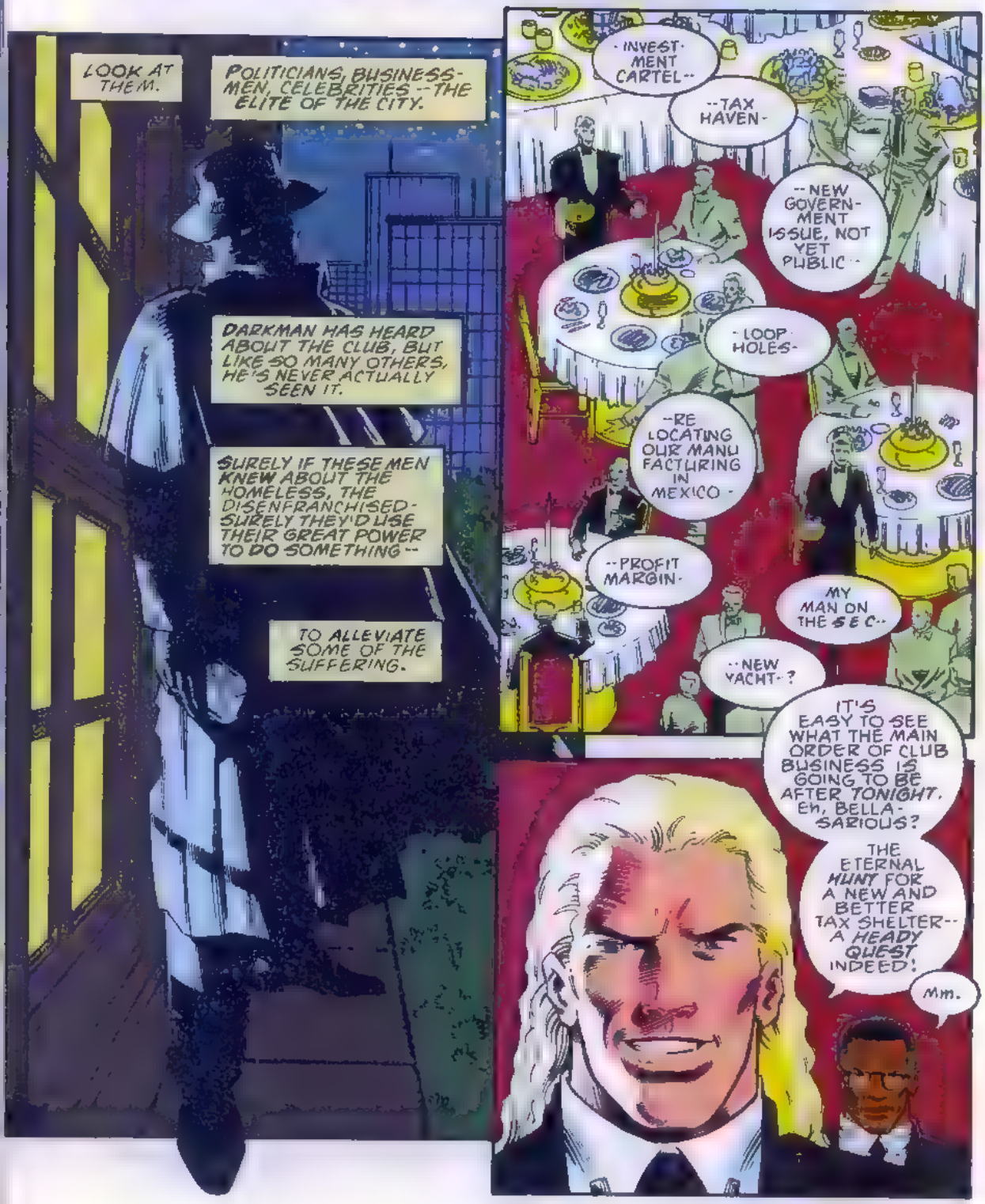
NO. DON'T BURN! I NEED THIS NEW BATCH OF SKIN
I'LL GET YOU NEW COMPONENTS - BUT THE SKIN FIRST!
KROOSH
I FORBID YOU TO BURN!
Hmh LOOKS OKAY.
THK THK
BLOOP!
BLAST IT! HOW AM I EXPECTED TO DO MY WORK -- TO LIVE MY LIFE -
-- WHEN I'M SURROUNDED BY CAST-OFF, BROKEN JUNK!
WHAM
ON LINE SYNthesis retr RETRacking..
HAH. JUNK IS RIGHT -- AND WHAT AM I BUT MORE JUNK?
DETACHMENT -- PANIC -- RAGE -- DESPAIR ALL RIP THROUGH DARKMAN'S SKULL IN SECONDS. AND NO SOONER DOES DESPAIR TAKE ITS TURN --
- THAN DETERMINATION SLIDES IN BEHIND IT.
C-CAN'T -- WON'T WALLOW IN MISERY!
GOT TO GET OUT -- AWAY FROM MYSELF!
HE HAS CLOTHES -- SCAVENGED, STOLEN OR BOUGHT WITH THE MONEY HE TOOK FROM EDDIE BLACK'S MEN -
AND HE HAS A FEW SPARE FACES, KEPT IN THE DARK --
SO ALL HE NEEDS -

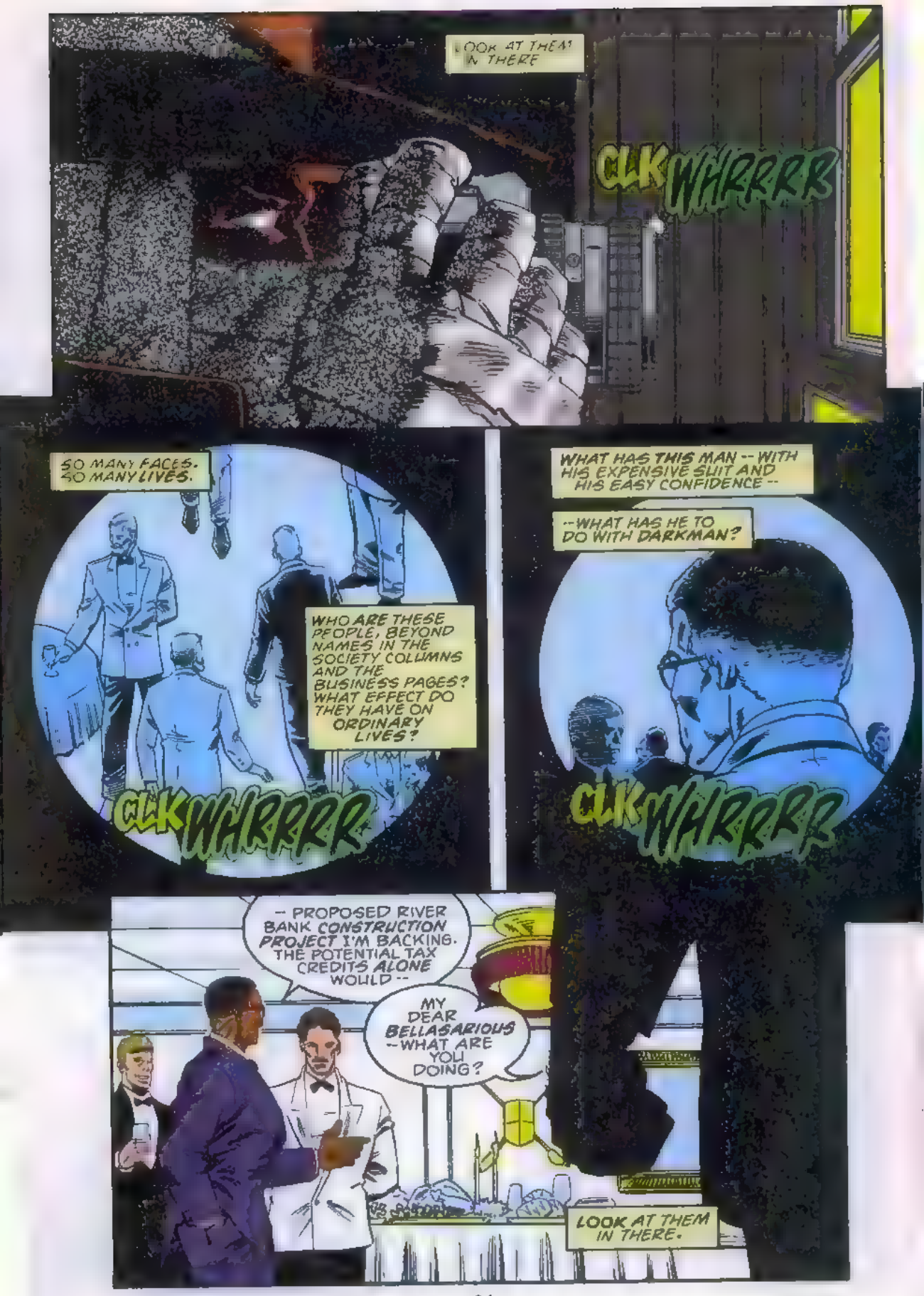
BLIC CITY LIBRARY OF
--IS SOMETHING TO DO.
--AND IT'S NOT UNTIL HE CHANCES ACROSS AN HISTORICAL REFERENCE
IT IT CAN'T BE!
BUT THERE IT IS: A SEVENTEENTH CENTURY ENGLISHMAN --
THE WITCHFINDER HAD CALLED HIMSELF "MATTHEW HOPKINS," AS IF HE WAS SOMEONE IMPORTANT --
- A MAN WHO SOUGHT OUT AND KILLED 'WITCHES' --
-- A MAN DEAD SINCE 1647!
BUT -- HOW--?!
BUT NEWSPAPERS, BIOGRAPHICAL INDEXES -- THEY OFFER NO INFORMATION
WHO DEMANDED PAYMENT FOR THE 'SER. CES' HE PROVIDED TO THE TOWNS HE TRAVELED THROUGH --
THERE MUST BE A WAY TO FIND OUT WHO HE REALLY IS.
AFTERNOON, FRANK. GOOD LUNCH?
CLK WHRRRR
POLICE STATION 18 PRECINCT
LOW HEARTBURN. WHAT ELSE MATTERS?
THE POLICEMAN -- AT THE HOSPITAL -- DIDN'T HE SAY SOMEONE WAS BLOCKING THE INVESTIGATION INTO THE KILLINGS?
CLK WHRRRR
YOU'RE A PHILOSOPHER FRANK.
IF SO, THERE'S AN EASY WAY --
NIGHT, FRANK.
TOMORROW, PETE.
TO CHECK

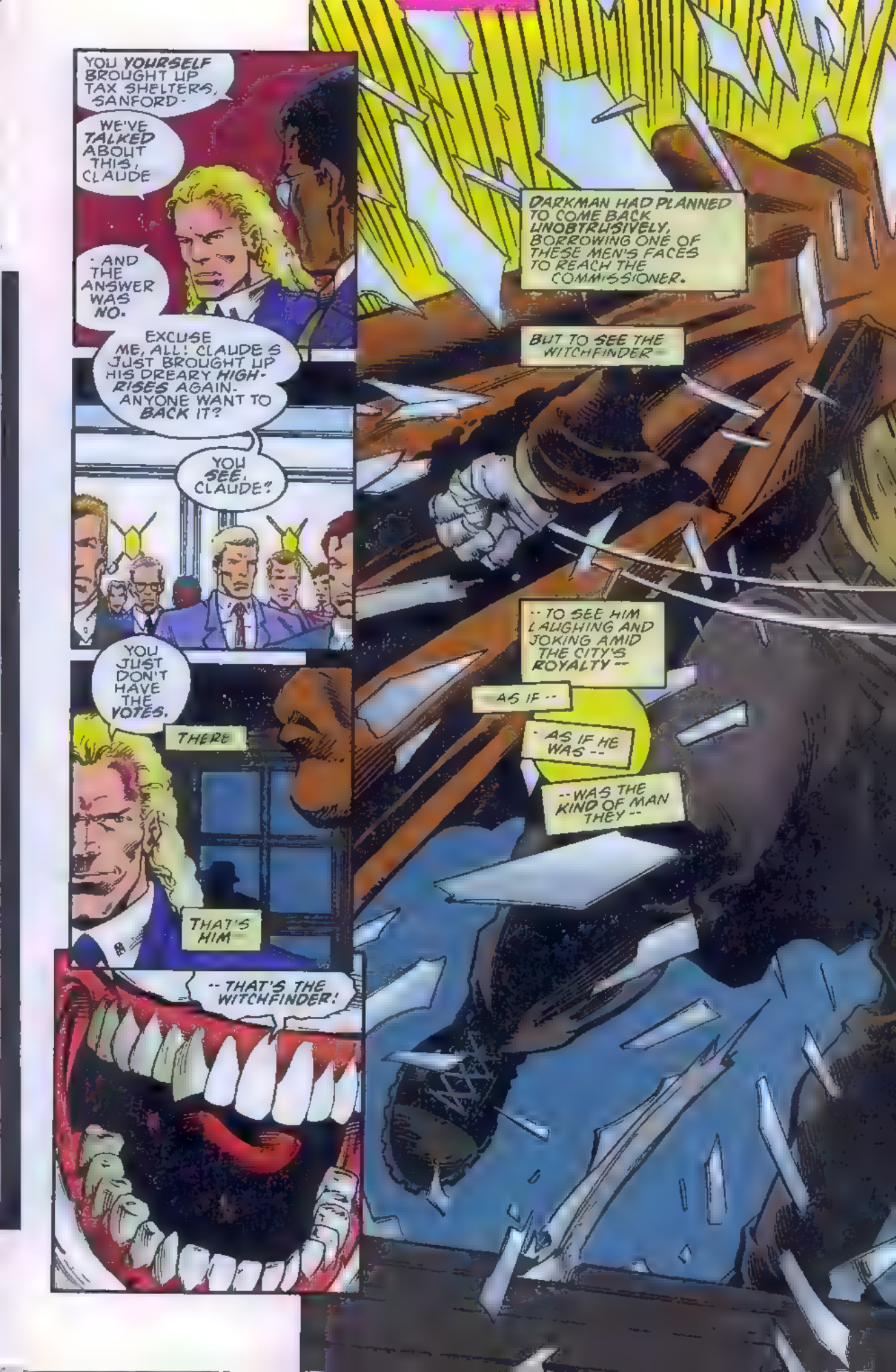
THAT WAS FAST, FRANK. FORGET SOMETHING?
MM-HMM.
ONCE INSIDE, HE DOESN'T HAVE TO WAIT LONG.
POLICE
BLAST IT, WHERE DID MY FILES GO?!
THE REPORT ON THAT BAG LADY WHO GOT BURNED - IT WAS ON MY DESK THIS MORNING!
WHERE IS IT?!
HEY-HEY-- KELSO--
--ALL THAT STUFF--IT'S BEEN SET ASIDE FOR A SPECIAL COMMISSION TO LOOK INTO, REMEMBER?
"SPECIAL COMMISSION, MY BUTT!
YOU KNOW AS WELL AS I DO, MCKENNA -- THERE'S NO SPECIAL COMMISSION!
THIS ONE'S JUST BEING BURIED -- LIKE ALL THE OTHERS.
KELSO, KE-SO, KEL-SO A WORD TO THE WISE, MY FRIEND.
THIS ONE'S ON THE COMMISSIONER'S PERSONAL SAY-SO, CAPICE?
SO DON'T HOT-DOG IT --
-- THE COMMISH DON'T LIKE HOT DOGS. IF YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN.

THE COMMISSIONER, Hmm? EVERYONE IN TOWN KNOWS WHERE TO FIND COMMISSIONER SANFORD LOWELL.
THE METROPOLITAN CLUB.
EVENING, FRIEND. I'M ARMITAGE -- FROM THE TRIB. WHO DO I TALK TO ABOUT DOING A FEATURE ON --
YOU RE NOT A MEMBER.
YOU DON'T GET IN.
BUT SURELY THE PUBLIC HAS A RIGHT TO KNOW. WHAT ABOUT FREEDOM OF THE PRESS? WHAT ABOUT --
WHAT ABOUT THE RIGHT TO BEAR ARMS? THE RIGHT TO PROTECT PRIVATE PROPERTY?
Hmm. THAT S A COMPELLING ARGUMENT.
WASHINGTON! HOW'S IT HANGING, MY FRIEND?
ANY TROUBLE HERE?
NONE, YOUR HONOR. THIS FELLOW WAS JUST ASKING DIRECTIONS. ISN'T THAT RIGHT, SIR?
Uh -- RIGHT.
DARKMAN CONSIDERS GIVING UP -- THIS WAS ONLY INTENDED TO BE A DIVERSION, AFTER ALL.
BUT HE'S GOT HIS TEETH INTO IT NOW.
ALL IT SEEMS TO TAKE TO GET INTO THE METROPOLITAN CLUB IS THE RIGHT FACE --
- AND DARKMAN KNOWS HOW TO GET THAT!

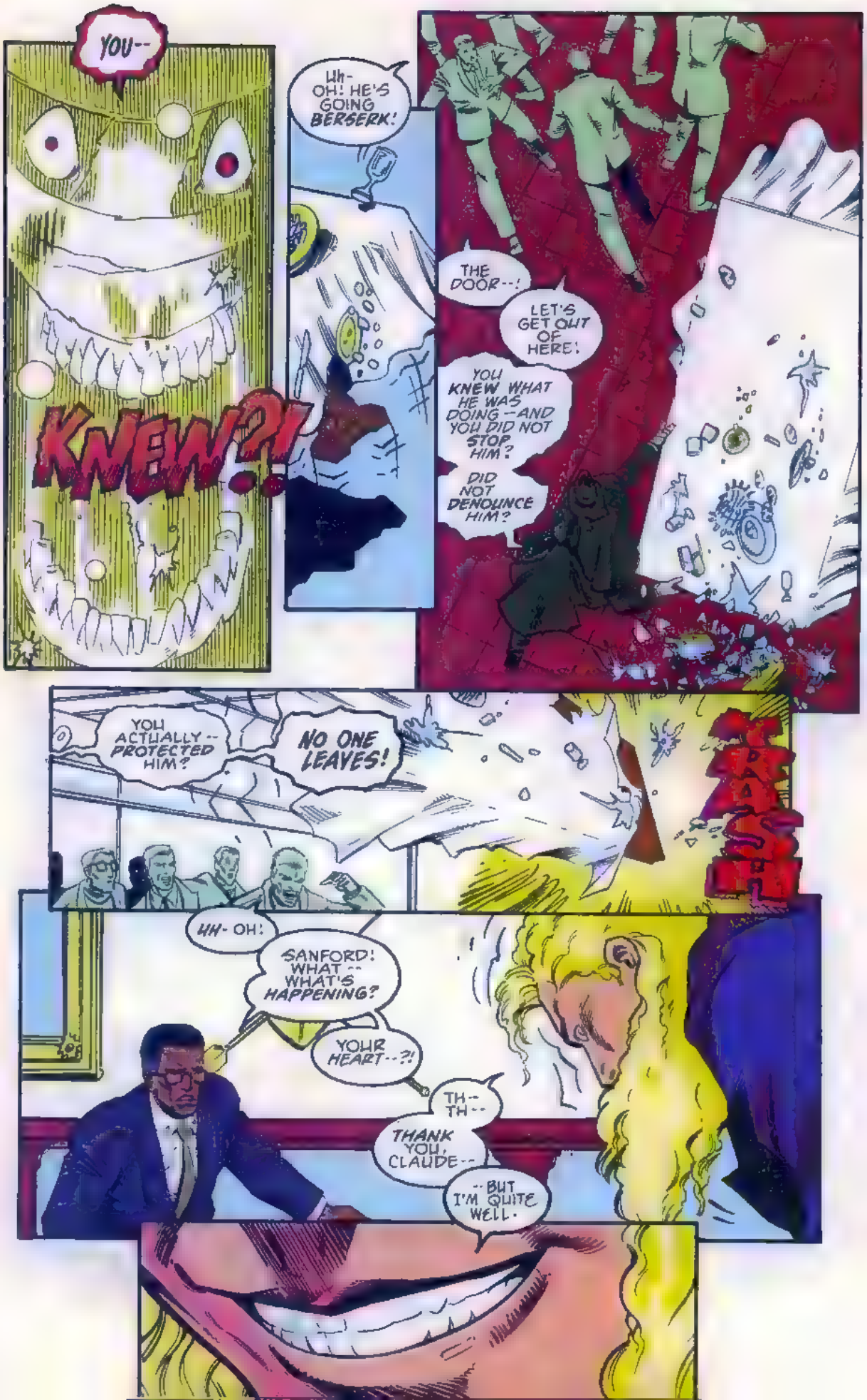
CLK WHRRRR
CLK WHRRRR


LOOK AT THEM.
POLITICIANS, BUSINESS-MEN, CELEBRITIES --THE ELITE OF THE CITY.
DARKMAN HAS HEARD ABOUT THE CLUB, BUT LIKE SO MANY OTHERS, HE'S NEVER ACTUALLY SEEN IT.
SURELY IF THESE MEN KNEW ABOUT THE HOMELESS, THE DISENFRANCHISED- SURELY THEY'D USE THEIR GREAT POWER TO DO SOMETHING --
TO ALLEVIATE SOME OF THE SUFFERING.
-INVEST-MENT CARTEL--
--TAX HAVEN-
--NEW GOVERN-MENT ISSUE, NOT YET PUBLIC --
-LOOP HOLES-
--RE LOCATING OUR MANU FACTURING IN MEXICO -
--PROFIT MARGIN-
MY MAN ON THE SEC--
--NEW YACHT-?
IT'S EASY TO SEE WHAT THE MAIN ORDER OF CLUB BUSINESS IS GOING TO BE AFTER TONIGHT. Eh, BELLA-SARIOUS?
THE ETERNAL HUNT FOR A NEW AND BETTER TAX SHELTER-- A HEADY QUEST INDEED!
Mm.


LOOK AT THEM IN THERE
CLK WHRRRR
SO MANY FACES. SO MANY LIVES.
WHO ARE THESE PEOPLE, BEYOND NAMES IN THE SOCIETY COLUMNS AND THE BUSINESS PAGES? WHAT EFFECT DO THEY HAVE ON ORDINARY LIVES?
CLK WHRRRR
WHAT HAS THIS MAN -- WITH HIS EXPENSIVE SUIT AND HIS EASY CONFIDENCE --
--WHAT HAS HE TO DO WITH DARKMAN?
CLK WHRRRR
-- PROPOSED RIVER BANK CONSTRUCTION PROJECT I'M BACKING. THE POTENTIAL TAX CREDITS ALONE WOULD --
MY DEAR BELLASARIOUS --WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
LOOK AT THEM IN THERE.


YOU YOURSELF BROUGHT UP TAX SHELTERS, SANFORD.
WE'VE TALKED ABOUT THIS, CLAUDE
.AND THE ANSWER WAS NO.
EXCUSE ME, ALL! CLAUDE S JUST BROUGHT UP HIS DREARY HIGH-RISES AGAIN. ANYONE WANT TO BACK IT?
YOU SEE, CLAUDE?
YOU JUST DON'T HAVE THE VOTES.
THERE
THAT'S HIM
-- THAT'S THE WITCHFINDER!
DARKMAN HAD PLANNED TO COME BACK UNOBTRUSIVELY, BORROWING ONE OF THESE MEN'S FACES TO REACH THE COMMISSIONER.
BUT TO SEE THE WITCHFINDER
-- TO SEE HIM LAUGHING AND JOKING AMID THE CITY'S ROYALTY --
AS IF --
AS IF HE WAS --
-- WAS THE KIND OF MAN THEY --

THEY MUST BE TOLD--
--THEY MUST LEARN WHAT A MONSTER IS IN THEIR MIDST!
MURDERER!
THAT MAN--
DARKMAN? HERE?
I'LL GET SECURITY.
--THAT MAN IS A MURDERER! A KILLER OF INNOCENTS!
NO SECURITY. NOT YET.
ALL RIGHT, "DARKMAN." HOW MUCH DO YOU WANT?
NAME A PRICE.
WHAT?:

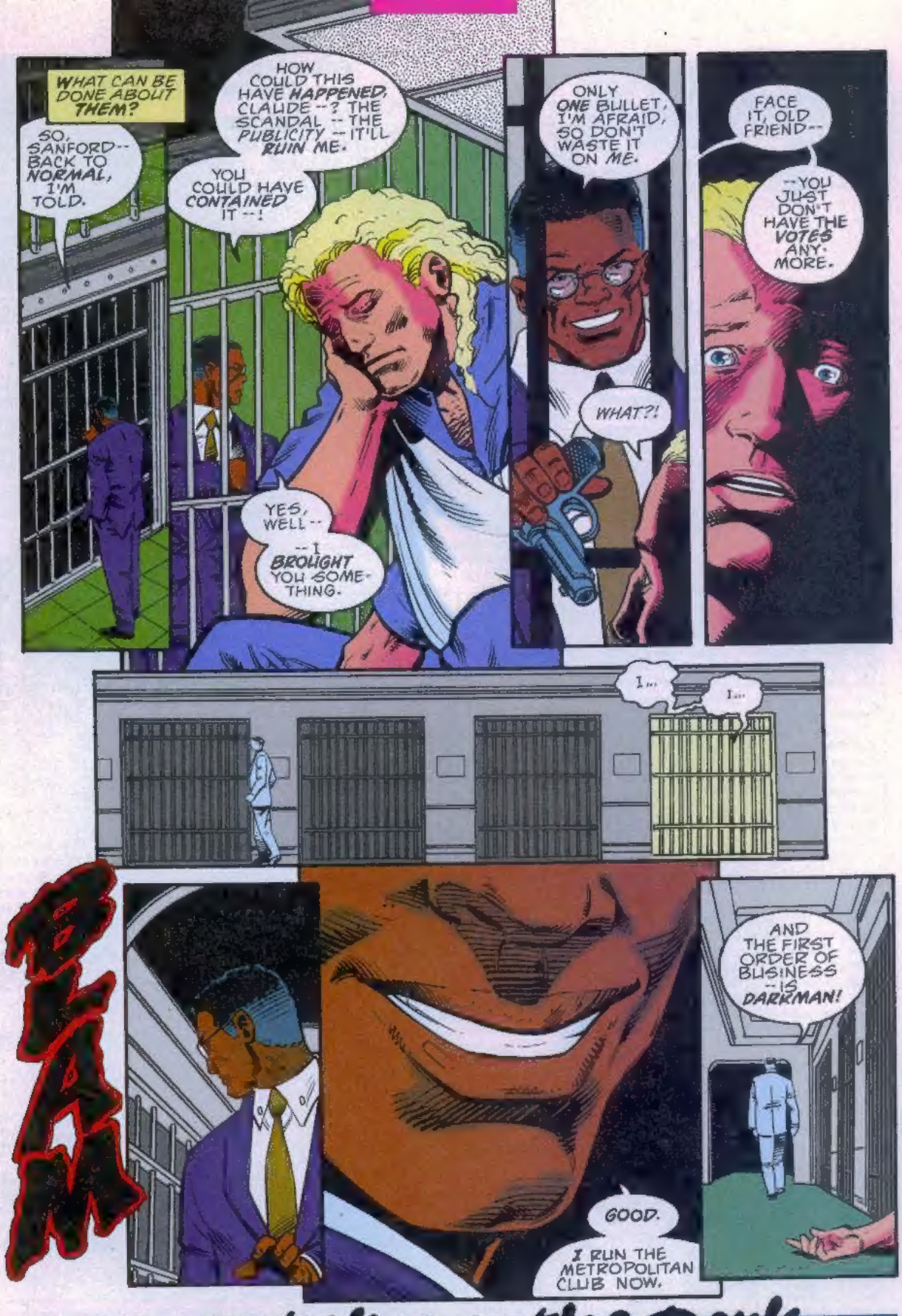

YOU--
KNEW?!
UH- OH! HE'S GOING BERSERK!
THE DOOR--!
LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!
YOU KNEW WHAT HE WAS DOING--AND YOU DID NOT STOP HIM?
DID NOT DENOUNCE HIM?
YOU ACTUALLY-- PROTECTED HIM?
NO ONE LEAVES!
CRASH
UH- OH!
SANFORD! WHAT-- WHAT'S HAPPENING?
YOUR HEART--?!
TH-- TH--
THANK YOU, CLAUDE--
--BUT I'M QUITE WELL.

WHERE IS HE?
WHERE IS THE MURDERER?
EH?
I TOLD YOU, CREATURE I WILL NOT KILL YOU UNTIL YOU HAVE CONFESSED YOUR SINS BEFORE THE LORD!
BUT IT HAS OCCURRED TO ME THAT YOU WOULD BE JUST AS ABLE TO CONFESS -- INDEED, PERHAPS MORE LIKELY --
-- WITHOUT YOUR ARMS -- YOUR LEGS --
H HE'S MAD!
I KNEW BUT I N-NEVER THOUGHT HE WAS QUITE SO --!
NONE OF US DID DOCTOR.
WHO WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THAT HE'D SPONTANEOUSLY REGRESS --
--SO PUBLICLY!
-- WITHOUT YOUR EYES --!
SLURP...

I RECOGNIZE YOU NOW -- YOU'RE LOWELL HIMSELF!
WHAT KIND OF MAN ARE YOU -- TO ABUSE THE PUBLIC TRUST LIKE THIS?!
I AM A RIGHTEOUS MAN! ONE WHO IS NOT SWAYED BY THE ENTREATIES OF MONSTERS!
THERE ARE TWO MONSTERS HERE, LOWELL:
AND, IF YOUR FELLOW BLUE-BLOODS WON'T STOP YOU --
CLANG
-YOUR FELLOW MONSTER WILL!
YES, AN OUTSIDE LINE PLEASE. CONNECT ME TO THE POLICE STATION -- PRECINCT 13!
CLAUDE --?!
CLAUDE -- NO! CALL CLUB SECURITY -- NOT THE COPS!
THIS IS CLAUDE BELLASARIOUS. PUT ME THROUGH TO BRIAN KELSO.
NO, DON'T BOTHER THE CAPTAIN...
YOU STOP ME?!
CHING
LOOK AT YOU -- WOUNDED, STIFF, CLUMSY AS AN OX --

-- YOU'RE NO CHALLENGE!
KTING
NO!
--YOU'RE EASY MEAT!
I SAID--
NO!
AAHH!
KAKT
MY ARM--!
AND NOW, LOWELL--
RRRRRRRRRR
DARKMAN HAS NO ILLUSIONS WHERE THE POLICE ARE CONCERNED.
HE KNOWS WHAT HE WOULD BE IN THEIR EYES--
--AND ACTS ACCORDINGLY.

UNBELIEVERS -- ALL AROUND ME! AND MY PREY FLED!
I MUST --
I DON'T THINK SO, SANFORD.
BRUSH ME ASIDE, WILL YOU?
SOON...
BRIONNE DeSANTOS, FOR WDMC NEWS.
WE'RE NOT QUITE SURE WHAT'S HAPPENED -- BUT THERE SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN AN ALTERCATION AT THE METROPOLITAN CLUB--
--INVOLVING POLICE COMMISSIONER SANFORD LOWELL.
LET'S SEE IF WE CAN --
HARLOT!
THERE ARE DEMONS EVERYWHERE -- WITCHES, IMPS, FOLLOWERS OF THE DARK ONE! YOU NEED ME TO ROOT THEM OUT AND DESTROY THEM!
YOU NEED ME!!
COME ALONG, COMMISH.
IT'S OVER. AT LEAST FOR NOW.
THE THREAT OF THE WITCHFINDER IS ENDED.
BUT WHAT OF THE METROPOLITAN CLUB? THE CITY'S ELITE -- THEY KNEW EVERYTHING AND THEY DID NOTHING.


WHAT CAN BE DONE ABOUT THEM?
SO, SANFORD-- BACK TO NORMAL, I'M TOLD.
HOW COULD THIS HAVE HAPPENED, CLAUDE --? THE SCANDAL -- THE PUBLICITY -- IT'LL RUIN ME.
YOU COULD HAVE CONTAINED IT --!
YES, WELL --
-- I BROUGHT YOU SOMETHING.
ONLY ONE BULLET, I'M AFRAID, SO DON'T WASTE IT ON ME.
WHAT?!
FACE IT, OLD FRIEND--
--YOU JUST DON'T HAVE THE VOTES ANY MORE.
I...
I...
AND THE FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS --IS DARKMAN!
GOOD.
I RUN THE METROPOLITAN CLUB NOW.

NEXT > Dancing in the Dark

Face Value

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Send letters to: FACE VALUE c/o Marvel Entertainment Group 387 Park Ave South NY NY 10016

Please be sure to tell us if you wish your address to be withheld

Welcome to the first Darkman letters page! We know that this is just a Limited Series, but we sent out some advanced black and white copies of Darkman #1 to a random selection of readers in order to get some comments so we *could* get a letters page before the six issues were up!

Why did we do this? Because we care what our readers think, that's why! So write in today and tell us whether you're enjoying the current storyline or not!

Dear Fabian and Carlos,

Thanks a million for the preview copy of DARKMAN #1, guys! Since I was very impressed by the movie a few years back, the comic definitely appealed to me. I appreciated how the first issue picks up right where the movie left off, with Julie still searching for Peyton and I also liked the return of some of the minor characters from the film—namely the now-fingerless Eddie Black and that weasel Spiv Hansen!

Continuity with the movie seemed tight and flawless, and there was even a helpful 6-page recap for the benefit of readers who haven't yet seen it. Could this have been a little shorter, though? Maybe if it was told in a more straightforward narrative style, rather than with Peyton's random thoughts, you could have chopped off a page or two. Minor complaint, though.

The writing? Great. It was consistent with the characterization in the movie, and kept the action moving at a fast, enjoyable pace. I can't find any place where it lags. And it relied more on implied "off-screen" violence than on gruesome gore, which would have detracted from the suspense. The art? Pretty cool. Javier Saltares has a style that is very well-suited to the mood of the movie, and he is an excellent storyteller with strong panel layouts. My only complaint is that most of the characters, especially Peyton, Durant, and Julie didn't look much like the actors that played them, but this is probably more for legal reasons than a reflection on Javier's talent, I'm guessing.

I've mentioned a few minor problems I had, but there was one MAJOR plot point that I just don't buy. Of course, I'm referring to the fact that Durant is STILL ALIVE!

OK, OK, I realize that this is comics, but not even a comic character could have survived that crash! In any case, I'm hoping Mr. Busiek will put Durant's survival to good use in the story in the future issues, which I will DEFINITELY be buying! This sneak peek was a very high-quality, enjoyable effort, one that should attract fans of the film and, to a lesser degree, those who have never seen it. I think you've got a winner here, folks.

Scott Haan
920 State St.
Lafayette, IN 47905

We think Javier's stuff is pretty cool too, Scott. Be sure to check out his work on the upcoming NIGHT THRASHER monthly title, on sale in June!

As for Kurt bringing back Durant, well, let's just say he's got a few tricks in store for Darkman that'll make heads spin!

Dear Fabian,

First I would like to congratulate you on the great ability to choose the right concept and bring it to your audience. I would like to congratulate and thank you.

Upon receiving Darkman's preview, I felt most privileged, and once I learned you wanted my opinion, privilege turned to honor. So here it is:

How much more realistic can one possibly expect the field of comic books to get? I would not want to put myself under Darkman's wrappings for anything in this world!

Here he is, a man deprived of all his love, life, and pride, doomed to face a lifetime of agony and confront the demons which lie inside him.

As if that were not enough, starting to think that the only person he can get revenge on is no longer among the living, how much more suffering can one possibly expect.

Before I read this preview, I was completely unfamiliar with the Darkman's character and now I have even watched the movie. My skin is practically bubbling in excitement to see what you do with this character's future! My main regret is that this is only a mini-series but if the following issues keep up the pace and drama of the first, maybe it won't be long before we get a regular series for Darkman.

I am sure that writer Kurt Busiek can find enough material in his morbid mind to keep Darkman afloat, accompanied by the mind-altering, heart attack-inflicting, soul touching art of Mr. Saltares, we are looking at a new mega-hit from Marvel!

I would like to see Darkman shining brighter than any other star in the Marvel constellation. (Of course with the exception of my main man Morbius.)

Aleksander C. Spacca
340 Dixon Drive
Hewitt, TX 76643

Well, Aleksander, there are no plans for a monthly Darkman title, but we are discussing a second Limited Series—what do all of you think?

So, Darkman's on par with Morbius in your book, huh? Cool by us. As far as Darkman exacting revenge on Durant, keep reading—it'll be good!

To The Dark Times,

Right off, I would like to thank you for sending me a preview. I was surprised and honored to receive it. Thanks!

First of all, I enjoyed the original movie adaptation. As a matter of fact, I liked the comic more than I liked the movie! The movie had an "A- movie" budget and a B- movie" feel. I read that Sam Raimi was influenced by comic books and it showed in the movie he made!

This brings me to the current Darkman limited series. I am glad Marvel is doing a follow-up, though over two years is too long to have waited!

This is a character who deserves a regular series! Vigilante-style revenge aside, the first series and the movie did not explore his madness and alienation enough. This time—whoa! look out—"You can't be dead, Durant! You can't be! You must still be alive!" (All right, so he is.) I like the idea Peyton has gone totally crackerdog.

I hope to see this part of him explored even more deeply in future issues. There are very few characters in comics today that are as way-over-the-edge as Darkman. How will he deal with the fact that Durant is still alive? What of his deep desire to be with Julie? How is he dealing with the knowledge that he may never live a normal life?

Kurt Busiek has a great feel for dark and moody characters on or over the edge. "What if Venom Had Possessed the Punisher?" (#44) is proof of that and Darkman is merely verification. Javier Saltares and Andrew Pepoy perform the art chores as if they were possessed by the Spirit of Vengeance! Richard Starkings' lettering adds to the dark and insane mood. I'm sorry I can't comment on Steve Mattsson's coloring, seeing as how my advance issue is only a photocopy, but don't take that as a complaint—I'm sure it'll be as high as the standards set in every other facet of this title!

I'll go out on a limb and say this is probably Steve's best work. A career high! There—that's without even seeing it!

Thank you for taking the time to send me an advance copy and reading my letter.

Todd Adam Gross
4807 Palm
Bellaire, TX 77401

Well, Todd, we promise, more on Peyton's relationships with Durant and Julie in the coming issues. Now that you've seen Steve's coloring, what do you think? It gets a big "Thumbs Up" from us, how about you?

NEXT ISSUE: More about the Peyton/Julie/Coe love triangle. Also, someone's back who could make Darkman's life even more unpleasant. Yeah, like it could get any worse! See You In Thirty!